<u>**REMARKS**</u>

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final Office Action mailed August 24, 2004. Claims 1-16, 18, 20, 22-28, and 30 remain pending. Through this response, claims 17, 21, and 29 have been cancelled and claims 13 and 20 have been amended to place in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and pending claims are respectfully requested.

I.   Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 1-12 are allowed. Further, Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 16-18, 21, and 25-30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant has incorporated the limitations of claim 17 into independent claim 13 and has incorporated the limitations of claim 29 into independent claim 20.

In that it is believed that every rejection has been overcome, it is respectfully submitted that each of the claims that remains in the case is presently in condition for allowance.

II.   Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

A.   Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Fourth Paragraph

Claim 23 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph. In particular, the Office Action alleges that claim 23 "does not further limit, in that it is the same as claim 21." Applicant has cancelled claim 21 and retained like limitations in claim 23. Applicant

respectfully submits that the cancellation of claim 21 has rendered the rejection moot, and therefore requests that the rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph, be withdrawn.

III.   Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 13-15, 20, 22, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Ravanelli, et al.* ("*Ravanelli*," U.S. Pat. No. 5,789,785) in view of *Colclaser, et al.* ("*Colclaser*," U.S. Pat. No. 6,327,125).

Section 7 of the Office Action provides as follows:

Claims 16-18, 21, 25-30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Through this response, Applicant has incorporated the limitations of claim 17 into independent claim 13 and has incorporated the limitations of claim 29 into independent claim 20.   Applicant submits that the rejection has thus been rendered moot, and respectfully requests that the rejection to claims 13 and 20 be withdrawn.

Because independent claims 13 and 20 are allowable over *Ravanelli* in view of *Colclaser*, corresponding dependent claims 14-16, 18 (corresponding to claim 13) and 22-28, 30 (corresponding to claim 20) are allowable as a matter of law for at least the reason that dependent claims 14-16, 18 and 22-28, 30 contain all elements of their respective base claim. See, *e.g.*, *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

IV.   Canceled Claims

As identified above, claims 17, 21, and 29 have been canceled from the application through this Response without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to present these canceled claims, or variants thereof, in continuing applications to be filed subsequently.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on _9-10-0 4_.

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Signature